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THE

LIBERAL SUPPORT

OF

Gospel Ministers,

OPENED

AND

INCULCATED.

By ISAAC BACKUS,

PASTOR of a CHURCH in MIDDLEBOROUGH.

The Labourer is worthy of his Reward.

1 TIM. V. 18.

B O S T O N :

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AT a time when public credit is sunk very low,
and our highest Rulers are loudly complained
of, all men among us may justly be alarmed; for a
Government divided against itself, is brought to deso-
lation; and every city or house divided against itself,
shall not stand. And God says, Them that honor
me, I will honor, and they who despise me, shall be
lightly esteemed. And as the gospel ministry, and its
free support, are the chief means of glorifying God in
the world, it is hoped that the following attempt to
promote the same, will be candidly received.

Middleborough, Aug. 21, 1790.



THE
LIBERAL SUPPORT
OF
GOSPEL MINISTERS,
OPENED AND INCULCATED.

1 COR. ix. 14.

Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel.

THIS is as plain an ordinance of God as any he ever instituted; and it is as distinct from the ordinances of men, as heaven is from earth. The ordinances of men, enforced by the sword, are to defend the persons and property of all impartially, and to punish such as work ill to their neighbours; but the ordinances of the gospel are for begetting and promoting faith and love in the souls of men, so as to act towards God and their neighbours from heavenly motives. Therefore pure religion is an infinite blessing to mankind; and false pretences to it, produce infinite mischiefs. This hath been experienced in all ages, and in all countries. Fear and love are the great principles of human actions; but they were divided by the fall, and the devil hath held men in bondage through fear of death. And nothing can unite these two principles, but faith in the death and merits of Christ, our great high priest and king in heaven. His kingdom is not of this world, and therefore the world have no right to use force about his ministers. This will more fully appear, if we consider what the gospel is, who are the true preachers of it, and what is intended by living of the gospel. I.

I. What is the gospel? It is a pure revelation from God, of salvation through his Son, by the power of the Holy Ghost. It is by the seed of the woman, who hath bruised the serpent's head. Truth and love form the character of Christ and his children; and deceit and cruelty form the character of the devil and his children; and God hath put *enmity* between them, Gen. iii. 15. This appeared in the old world between Cain and Abel; and between the seed of Cain and the seed of Seth. After the flood the church descended in the line of Shem, until Abraham was called out of Chaldea, and received the promise of the descent of the church in his seed, until Christ came, in whom all the families of the earth should be blessed. And when he received the *bloody* sign of circumcision, it was a *seal* to him of the righteousness of the faith which he before had in Christ, who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Rom. iv. 11—23. Gal. iii. 10—22. Circumcision was a type of the death of Christ, and of a change of heart by his word and spirit. Therefore he said of the remnant who are saved, The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul, that thou mayst live.—The word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayst do it. And an inspired apostle says, That is the word of faith which we preach, that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Deut. xxx. 6—14. Rom. x. 6—10.
Abraham

Abraham had no right to circumcise any person that was not born in his house, until he had bought him as a servant with money ; and he was an eminent type of the Son of God, who purchased the church with his own blood. Therefore the gospel says, Awake, awake, put on strength, O Zion, put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem the holy city ; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.— Shake thyself from the dust ; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem : loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion : for thus saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for nought, and ye shall be redeemed without money. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth ? Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Isaiah lii. 1—3, 7. Rom. x. 15—17. And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness ; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. Bodily exercise profiteth little ; but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come, 1 Tim. iii. 16. iv. 8. Every one that doth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God. John iii. 20, 21. The gospel is a pure revelation from God, which the angels saw more of when God was manifest in the flesh, than they ever did before ; and the promises of grace belong only

only to those who believe in and obey the Son of God. We come therefore to inquire,

II. Who are the true preachers of the gospel? In the *first* place, they are all *taught of God*, without which no man can come to his Son. John vi. 44, 45. When he came as the light of the world, none received him but they who were *born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God*. John i. 9—14. No man can say that Jesus Christ is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. 1 Cor. xii. 3. If any man have not the *Spirit of Christ* he is none of his. Rom. viii. 9. Without it he is not a Christian, but a blind leader of the blind. He who hath not a single eye to God, to learn and do his will, is full of darkness. Matt. vi. 21—23. An evil bias blinds the eyes of the wise, and perverts the words of the righteous; and how much more the unrighteous, who were never born again? In the *second* place, all true ministers of Christ, receive special gifts from him, for the great work to which they are called. A good natural capacity for teaching, and human learning and accomplishments; especially a good acquaintance with language, and with the best methods of conveying our ideas to others, are of great importance in these affairs. Yet all these, without an honest heart, enable men to do the more mischief, both in the world, and in the church of God. Therefore we read of the *slight of men, and cunning craftiness*, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, in the same chapter which assures us, that our ascended Lord gives gifts for pastors and teachers, who *speaking the truth in love*. Eph. iv. 11—16. In the *third* place, the apostle Peter says, As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards

stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God ; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth ; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ. The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed ; feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly ; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind ; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder : yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility ; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace unto the humble. 1 Peter iv. 10, 11. v. 1—5. Here we may see, that all true ministers of Christ, are regenerate persons, and have received special gifts from him for that work, with a command to be faithful stewards thereof, as they can answer it to him in the great day. They are leaders in the church, who are all to act as a united community, and to be subject one to another, as they would expect the *grace* of God to direct and assist them, and not to be *resisted* by him, as all the *proud* are. The name *Clergy*, which ministers have arrogated to themselves, came from the word which is here translated *heritage* ; and ministers have acted as *lords* over God's heritage, by assuming the power of church government unto themselves, as the priests had under the law, who could turn a king out of the temple. 2 Chron. xxvi. 18. And in this way the mother of harlots hath

hath reigned over the kings of the earth. Rev. xvii. 18. She hath assumed the power of disposing of crowns and countries at her pleasure, while she hath claimed a succession of church power from the apostles, which none but ministers could give or take away. America hath been divided, and filled with blood and slavery, from that hellish claim of power. But the Apostle Peter was so far from claiming any such power, that he allows none to be *priests* in the church of Christ, but those who are *born again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever*. And to this royal priesthood, and holy nation, he says, *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake*. 1 Peter i. 23. ii. 9—13. But when men invaded the prerogative of the Lord Jesus Christ, he and John said, *Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you, more than unto God, judge ye: for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard*. Acts iv. 19, 20. And John says, *Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil*. 1 John, iii. 9, 10. And when our Lord sent his gospel into the wide field of the world, he commanded his servants to let these two sorts of children grow together therein, until he should come to judgment, and cast the wicked into hell, and take his saints to heaven. Matt. xiii. 24—30, 37—43. While he requires his church to exclude all men who are fornicators, or covetous, or idolaters, or railers, or drunkards, or extortioners, from their communion. Purging out these evils, is the antitype of putting away all *leavened bread* out of their houses, in the time of the passover. 1 Cor. v. 7—13.

7—13. But by *confounding* church and world together, the holy government which Christ appointed in his church, hath been long trodden under foot. This will more plainly appear, if we consider,

III. What is intended by living of the gospel. As Jesus Christ is the only HEAD of his church, all the ordinances and commandments of men therein, is *will-worship*. And his command to his church is, Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all *in the name of the Lord Jesus*, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Col. ii. 10, 19—23. iii. 17. Covetous men, who privily brought in damnable heresies, were *self-willed*, under the name of *liberty*. 2 Peter, ii. 1—3, 10, 19. They sinned *wilfully* against the laws, blood and spirit of Christ. Heb. x. 26—29. And all such use *force* to support religious teachers, or else they refuse to support them any further than suits their inclinations. Men who love self above God and their neighbours, heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they turn away their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables. 2 Tim. iii. 1—5, iv. 1—4. But God said unto Aaron, Thou and thy sons with thee shall keep your priest's office for every thing of the altar, and within the vail, and ye shall serve: I have given your priest's office unto you as a service of gift; and the stranger that cometh nigh, shall be put to death. And the Lord spake unto Aaron, Behold, I also have given thee the charge of mine heave-offerings, of all the hallowed things of the children of Israel; unto thee have I given them, by reason of the *anointing*, and to thy sons by an ordinance forever. Numb. xviii. 7, 8. The ointment with which they were anointed, was of such a sacred composition, that

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God

God said, Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people. Exod. xxx. 38. But the holy Spirit, wherewith Christ and his saints are *anointed*, is infinitely more sacred. It brings souls to know the *truth*, and that *no lie is of the truth*. All *deceit* is of the *spirit of antichrist*. 1 John, ii. 20—27. And if it were not for that spirit, the laws of Christ would be plain, which say, Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. Ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. They that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. Gal. v. 13, 24, vi. 2—8. Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine; for the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn; and the labourer is worthy of his reward. 1 Tim. v. 17, 18.

As the gospel is a pure revelation from God, living of the gospel cannot mean a living by the laws of men, enforced by the sword. Neither can it mean, that the bodies of ministers should live
upon

upon spiritual food. To communicate unto them in all *good things*, cannot mean only *good words and fair speeches*; neither can a *reward for labour*, mean *alms to the poor*. Yet the world is full of these absurd imaginations. Teaching the fear of God by the precepts of men, hath made them deaf and blind to the voice and light of revelation. But the day is coming, when he says, The deaf shall hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness; the meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the holy One of Israel: for the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed; and all that watch for iniquity are cut off; that make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought. Isaiah xxix. 13—21. This prophecy was verified when Christ came in the flesh. Mat. xi. 6, xv. 7—9. And it will have a much more glorious accomplishment, when he shall reign with his saints upon earth. But the glory of that reign is described in such bright figures, that many put it beyond the resurrection of the body. Though, as the coming of Elijah meant the coming of John the Baptist, in the *spirit and power of Elias*, so I believe that the resurrection of the *souls* of the old martyrs, means the raising of their *spirit and power* in the churches, who would yield to *death*, rather than neglect obedience to the *commandments* of Jesus Christ. Mal. iv. 6. Luke i. 17. Rev. xii. 11, 17. xx. 4—6. The *words* of scripture ought ever to be regarded, *comparing spiritual things with spiritual*. 1 Cor. ii. 13. But *confounding* natural and spiritual things together, erected mystery Babylon. The Son of
God

God was within the Jewish church, when he warned her leaders against looking elsewhere for his kingdom ; but he is now at the right hand of the Father, making his people willing by the power of his gospel ; and he will strike through kings in the day of his wrath, and wound the heads over many countries. Luke xvii. 21. Acts ii. 29—39. Psalm cx. 1—6. Rev. xix. 11—21. But from the word *within*, many have imagined that they were to follow a rule *within* themselves, above what is written. Scornful men of old said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement ; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us ; for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves. Isaiah xviii. 14—16. To be carnally minded is death, and deceit came from hell ; and all men who think to secure themselves by their own doings, are in covenant with death, and at agreement with hell. Israel followed after the law of righteousness, but did not attain to it, because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the deeds of the law ; for they stumbled at that stumbling-stone, as it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone, and rock of offence ; and whosoever believeth on him, shall not be *ashamed*. Rom. viii. 6—9. ix. 31—33. Hearing and doing the *sayings* of Christ, is the only way for any to build upon the *Rock*. Mat. vii. 24. All others make lies their refuge. The death of Christ broke down the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles ; and says our apostle, Through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the *household of God* ; and are built upon the foundation

dation of the *apostles* and *prophets*, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone ; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord ; in whom you also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. Eph. ii. 18—22.

The *apostles* are set before the *prophets*, both in the first building of the Christian church, and also in her triumph over Babylon. Rev. xviii. 20. The Hebrew church was constituted of the *household of Abraham*, and the Christian church of the *household of God*. And as it is *adultery* for a woman to love any others above her husband, and to admit them into his place ; so it is for any to call themselves Christians, while they refuse to be governed wholly by the laws of Christ. He is the *first-born* among many brethren. And to enforce his laws, an inspired apostle says, Ye *are come* unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the *first-born*, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the *new covenant*, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. See that ye refuse not HIM THAT SPEAKETH ; for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from HIM THAT SPEAKETH FROM HEAVEN ; Whose voice then shook the earth ; but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may

may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a *consuming fire*. Rom. viii. 28—30. Heb. xii. 22—29. Hag. ii. 6—9. Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces? Therefore behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that *steal my words*, every one from his neighbour. Jer. xxiii. 29, 30. Thou that preachest a man should not *steal*, dost thou *steal*? thou that sayst a man should not commit *adultery*, dost thou commit *adultery*? thou that abhorrest *idols*, dost thou commit *sacrilege*? Rom. ii. 21, 22. All the treasures of the *first city* which Israel took in Canaan, were *consecrated* unto God; and they could not stand before their enemies, until they put away, in the valley of Achor, the *accursed* practice of *stealing* and *diffimulation* about those *sacred things*. Joshua vi. 19, vii. 11, 26. And when God received believing Gentiles into his church, with his *elect* among the Jews, he made the *valley of Achor* a resting place for them; and he said to the unbelievers, The Lord God shall slay thee, and call his servants by *another name*; that he who blesteth himself in the earth, shall bless himself in the *God of truth*, and he that sweareth in the earth, shall swear by the *God of truth*; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes. Isaiah lxxv. 1, 2, 9—16. And after charging Israel with *playing the harlot*, for going after others for a worldly living, God said, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her; and I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the *valley of Achor* for a *door of hope*.—And I will sow her

her unto me in the earth, and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy, and I will say to them who were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God. Hosea ii. 5, 14, 15, 23. And these prophecies are expressly applied to souls who were effectually called, from among Jews and Gentiles. Rom. ix. 24—26, x. 20, 21. To those who were *born again*. 1 Peter, i. 23, ii. 9, 10. All *Christians* have the *Spirit of truth*, who will guide them into all truth. John xvi. 13. And to distinguish the disciples of Christ by any *name* which men have invented, is a *carnal* practice. 1 Cor. iii. 3. When the Jews were carried into Babylon, the command was, Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattereth Israel, will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity, every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge. Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a *new covenant* with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; *not according to the covenant* that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt (which my covenant they break, although I was an *husband* unto them, saith the Lord :) but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their *inward parts*, and write it in their *hearts*, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for

for they shall *all know me*, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord ; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. Jer. xxxi. 10, 29—34. Upon which an inspired apostle says, In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. Heb. viii. 8—13, x. 9. Circumcision in the flesh, was the first covenant with Abraham and his seed, and circumcision in the heart is the second. And when the martyr Stephen was accused of holding that Jesus of Nazareth would destroy their temple at Jerusalem, and change the customs which Moses delivered unto Israel, he recited many facts concerning their nation, and then said, The most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands ; as saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool : what house will ye build me ? saith the Lord ; or what is the place of my rest ? hath not my hand made all these things ? Ye stiffnecked, and *uncircumcised in heart and ears*, ye do always resist the *Holy Ghost* : as your fathers did, so do ye. Acts viii. 8, 48—51. In the prophecy referred to, God says, *To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word*. And concerning Jews and Gentiles, he says, I will take of them for *priests*, and for *Levites*, saith the Lord. For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. Isaiah lxvi. 1, 2, 21, 22.

Now we are to remember, that the seed of Aaron, and all the tribe of Levi, were *hallowed* to God, in the room of all the *first-born* in Israel. None
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but the lawful seed of Aaron were priests, to make atonement for sin; and that was not to be done for any *presumptuous* man. Every man also who should act *presumptuously*, against the sentence of their priest and judge, in the place of God's sanctuary, was to die without mercy. Num. iii. 1—13. xv. 30. Deut. xvii. 8—12. The priest was to give sentence in such cases, by the Urim and Thummim; but these were lost in the Babylonian captivity; after which no priest was allowed to eat of the *most holy things*, who could not shew a *register* of his lawful descent from Aaron, until a priest stood up with Urim and Thummim. Ezra ii. 61—63. The words signify *light and perfection*. The ark of the testimony, the mercy-seat, the cloud of glory thereon, with the fire from heaven upon the altar, were also lost in the Babylonian captivity; but the *spirit* of them all was restored by Jesus, *who through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, to purge our consciences from dead works to serve the living God.* We have an altar whereof they have no right to eat, which serve the tabernacle. By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name. But to do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Christ is of an order above Levi or Abraham, whose covenants he hath *disannulled*. Heb. vii. 1—22. ix. 14. xiii. 10—16. And the great apostle of the Gentiles says, We are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but all our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the *new testament*, not of the *letter*, but of the *spirit*; for the letter *killeth*, but the spirit *giveth life*. 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6. So our Lord says, It is the *Spirit* that quickneth,

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the *flesh* profiteth nothing : the *words* that I speak unto you, they are *spirit*, and they are *life*. John vi. 63. And they who are thus quickned, are the only church of the *first-born*, under the gospel. All the *first-fruits* in Israel, were also consecrated unto God. Exod. xxii. 29. Therefore another apostle says, Of his own will begat he us with the *word of truth*, that we should be a kind of *first-fruits* of his creatures. James i. 18. The sovereign will of God is the cause, the word of truth is the means, and an intire devotedness to God is the end of the gospel dispensation.

From Abraham unto the death of Christ, peculiar religious privileges were confined to certain families. Even the preaching of the gospel was limited to the *house of Israel*, which is now free for *all nations*. Matt. x. 6. xxviii. 19. Therefore none have any reason to say, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge ; for all the privileges of the covenant of grace are personal, as they were not before the death of Christ. Lot was a righteous man, as well as Abraham ; but the Israelites were not allowed to invade the possessions of the children of Lot, nor to receive them into the church of God. Deut. ii. 17—19. Num. xxiii. 9. The first son of Abraham was cast out of the church, for *mocking* at the joy of faith ; and the unregenerate do the like to this day. Gen. xxi. 8—12. Gal. iv. 22—29. Esau *profanely* sold his birthright ; and he found no place of *repentance* afterwards. And the *envy* of his posterity brought ruin upon their country, while *electing love* continued with a *remnant* of the seed of Jacob. Gen. xxv. 29—34. xxvii. 38. Heb. xii. 16, 17. Ezek. xxxv. 11. Mal. i. 2, 3. Rom. ix. 7—13. xi. 5. And in the church of Israel, Reuben

ben lost his birthright, by defiling his father's bed ; and some of his tribe perished in the gainfaying of Korah. Gen. xlix. 3, 4. Num. xvi. 1—3. The birthright was Joseph's, who did wonders in Egypt, and Joshua led Israel into Canaan ; yet, because Ephraim became the head of an idolatrous kingdom, they were *divorced*, and never returned from captivity as a nation, but only as individuals. And though Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler ; yet the *crown* was taken from the house of David, for their wickedness, and was not restored until Jesus came to wear it. And for rejecting him, the Jews will be of the synagogue of satan, until they shall come to believe in Christ, and to *know his love to his church*. 1 Chron. v. 1, 2. Jer. iii. 8. Ezek. xxi. 25—27. Luke i. 31—33. Rev. iii. 9. The Hebrew and Christian churches, are the two candlesticks, into which God poured the oil of his grace, by his precepts to direct their way, and by his promises to support their souls, in holding up light to the world, who hate it, because it torments their consciences. The writings of Moses are the only records that any men have of the first creation, of the primitive state of man, of his fall, and of the promises of grace to the fathers, from Adam to his time. And the law of Moses was given, to expose the nature and infinite evil of sin, and to point sinners to the Son of God, who only can save from the guilt and power of it. Therefore the inspired apostle of the Gentiles says, The law entered, that the offence might abound ; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound : that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. And to guard against the imagination,

gination, that free salvation by grace, would encourage men to continue in sin, he said, To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness. Rom. v. 20, 21. vi. 1, 16. Christ was made a *curse* for us, that we might *receive the promise of the Spirit through faith*. And all men are *bewitched*, who claim the *promises of grace* in any other way. Gal. iii. 1, 10—14. Yet after the power of the devil was broken in the Roman empire, by the power of the gospel, men who were the servants of sin, assumed the place of the Son of God in his church, so as to be lawgivers and judges for all in religious affairs. And as he takes all that is done to his word, and to his saints, as done to himself, he says, He that despised Moses' law, died without mercy, under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath *trodden under foot the Son of God!* Heb. x. 28, 29. His person never was trodden under foot; but the *Gentiles* tread the *holy city under foot forty and two months*, while the *beast* continues, who at last kills the two witnesses. Rev. xi. 2—10. xiii. 5. And as *Lordship* is of the *Gentiles*, but is excluded from the church of Christ, I take the *holy city* to mean the government of his church, which men have trampled upon. Mark x. 42, 43. Instead of obeying the Lord Jesus Christ, so that his grace might reign through righteousness, ungodly men turned his grace into lasciviousness, in imitation of Cain, Balaam and Core. Jude 4—11. The way of Cain, was to worship God without faith in the blood of the Lamb, and to kill Abel because God accepted his believing worship, and did not accept Cain's willworship. Heb. xi. 4.

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1 John iii. 7—12. The error of Balaam was loving the world above God, and counselling a king to entice Israel into sin, for an earthly reward. The Midianites who did it, were of the seed of Abraham, as well as the Israelites, but not of that church. A sword was held up before Balaam to warn him of his danger; and he was finally slain with the sword. Gen. xxv. 2. Num. xxii. 31. xxiii. 9. xxxi. 8, 16. And Christ will slay all, with the sword of his mouth, who love the wages of unrighteousness, except they repent. 2 Peter ii. 15, 16. Rev. ii. 14—16. xix. 11—21. Korah raised a rebellion in Israel against the government which God had established therein, under Moses and Aaron, who were eminent types of Christ. Num. xvi. 1—3. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people. Acts iii. 22, 23. Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a *servant*; for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a *Son* over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. And of the priesthood, it is said, No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron: so also, Christ glorified not himself, to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. Heb. iii. 5, 6. v. 4—6. When the first king of Israel presumed to violate a known command of God, and then

then thought to atone for it by sacrifices, Samuel said unto him, *Rebellion* is as the sin of *witchcraft*, and stubbornness is as iniquity and *idolatry*: because thou hast rejected the *word of the Lord*, he hath also rejected thee from being king. 1 Sam. xv. 23. And by such *sorceries* have all nations been *deceived*. Rev. xviii. 23. When kings shall become nursing fathers, and queens nursing mothers to the church of Christ, they will *bow down* to his authority therein. Isaiah xlix. 23. And then we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all *godliness* and *honesty*. But we are commanded to withdraw from perverse disputers, who suppose that *gain* is *godliness*. 1 Tim. ii. 2. vi. 5. And what clearer evidence can we have of this character, than a refusal to allow the church of Christ to be governed wholly by his laws, and to have each soul act in all religious affairs out of a good conscience towards God? He never united the offices of priest and king in any one tribe of Israel. But all souls who are *born again*, are a chosen generation, a *royal priesthood*, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that they should shew forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light. And to them it is said, So is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the *ignorance* of foolish men: as *free*, and not using your *liberty* for a cloak of *maliciousness*, but as the *servants of God*. 1 Peter i. 23. ii. 9—16. All persons who are washed in the blood of Christ, are made *kings* and *priests* unto God and his Father, and they shall reign on the earth. Rev. i. 5, 6. v. 10. And who will dare to oppose the reign of Christ with his saints! Men who love themselves above God and their neighbours, are ever *learning*, and never *able* to come to the *knowledge of the truth*. Therefore

fore the apostle Paul said to Timothy, Continue thou in the things which thou hast *learned* and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast *learned* them ; and that from a child thou hast known the *holy scriptures*, which are *able* to make thee wise unto salvation, *through faith which is in Christ Jesus*. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness ; that the man of God may be *perfect*, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. 2 Tim. iii. 1—7, 14—17. And the apostle Peter, when speaking of the longsuffering of God with sinners, and of the new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, says of the writings of his beloved brother Paul, In which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are *unlearned* and *unstable wrest*, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. 2 Peter iii. 15, 16.

All men who love self above God and their neighbours, are unlearned and unstable, and are not able to come to the knowledge of the truth, let them have ever so great human accomplishments. No man *can* come to Christ, but he who hath *learned* of the Father. John vi. 44, 45. How earnest then should each one be, to be *taught of God* ? For Jesus says, All things are delivered unto me of my Father ; and no man knoweth the Son but the Father ; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and *learn* of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls ; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Matt. xi. 27—30. His yoke is
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the covenant of grace, wherein he says, I will put my *laws* into their *mind*, and write them in their *hearts*; and I *will* be their God, and they *shall* be my people. Heb. viii. 10. Which is as much above the covenant of circumcision, as Sarah was above Hagar, or as Jerusalem which *is above*, and is *free*, is superior to men who are in the *bondage of corruption*. Gal. iv. 25, 26. Rom. viii. 16—21. The pure gospel commission was given to the *eleven*, who were all regenerate persons; to whom Jesus said, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth: Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have *commanded* you; and lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world. Amen. Mat. xxviii. 16—20. No man who is not born again, so as to love Christ, and to observe all his commandments, has any more right to this promise, than a *thief* has to any promise of government, which he had stolen out of a public office; or than a *whore* has to support from an honest husband, when she loves and goes after others for a temporal living. In this way the church of Israel *played the harlot*. And God said, As troops of *robbers* wait for a man, so the company of priests *murder* in the way by consent; for they commit *lewdness*. Hosea ii. 5—8. vi. 9. Lest thou shouldst ponder the path of life, her ways are *moveable* that thou canst not know them. Prov. v. 6. Abraham hath been set up as the head of the covenant of grace, whose seed were to destroy all the inhabitants of Canaan, when their iniquity should be *full*. But when Israel was required to do it, ten spies said, We be not *able* to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we.

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And above six hundred thousand men laid their carcases in the wilderness, because they would not believe and obey God in that work. And all men who refuse to believe in and obey the Son of God will fall after the same example of unbelief. Gen. xv. 6, 16. Num. xiii. 31. Heb. iii. 6—11. iv. 11—16. He commands us to mortify our members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: for which thing's sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience. Mark ix. 43—48. Col. iii. 5, 6. But no sooner was Christianity acknowledged by earthly rulers, than idolatry was established by law. And all the world wondered after the beast, who received his power from the devil; and they said, Who is like unto the beast? who is *able* to make war with him? The whore sits upon a *scarlet-coloured* beast. Rev. xiii. 1—4. xviii. 3—5. And her ways are so *moveable*, that from Abraham she is gone to old Adam, to prove salvation by *works*, and not by *grace*. Sin and death came upon all the children of Adam by a *just* sentence of *law*; but righteousness and life came to all believers by a free *gift of grace*. The judgment was by *one* to condemnation; but the free gift is of *many offences* unto justification. For if by one man's offence, death reigned by one; much more they which receive *abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness*, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. For as by *one*, man's disobedience, many were *made sinners*; so by the obedience of *one*, shall many be *made righteous*. Rom. v. 12—19. Little children let no man *deceive* you: *he that doth righteousness, is righteous, even as he is righteous*. 1 John iii. 7. But multitudes are so much deceived, as to
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deny that we were *made sinners*, by the offence of Adam, or that we can be *made righteous*, by receiving the *gift* of Christ's *perfect righteousness*. And the deception is now carried so far, that salvation for all men, by their own doings and sufferings, in time or eternity, is more daringly proclaimed from London and Boston, than it is from Rome. Yea, their scheme includes the salvation of devils also; and are we not in Babylon! No persons in the church of Rome would swear falsely, or commit murder for her interests, without a promise from her ministers of help to get their souls out of *purgatory*. Cruel superstitions were thereby carried to an amazing length. But deceit and cruelty, under religious pretences, hath now brought forth infidelity, and a contempt of revelation, any further than will suit the inclinations of men. A profession of faith, without a life of holiness, is but a *dead body*. The devils believe that there is *one God*, and they *tremble* before the *Son of God*. James ii. 19—26. Mat. viii. 29. Therefore all men who can make use of the holy scriptures, for worldly purposes, without serving the Son of God with fear, and rejoicing with trembling, have not so much faith as the devils have. Psalm ii. 6—12. Acts iv. 25, 26. Our Lord was crucified by hypocrites and infidels; and his two witnesses are killed and rejoiced over in the same city, which *spiritually* is called Sodom and Egypt. The Sodomites were for defiling all men who came into their city, and Egypt refused to let the church go and serve God, according to his own institutions. And how full is the world of this impurity and tyranny! Rev. xi. 7—10. Pharaoh never claimed a greater power over Israel, than to bind them in all cases whatsoever. And since we have been delivered from the secular power

of GOSPEL MINISTERS.

power of foreign nations, we are daily enticed by men who refuse to allow us free liberty to serve God according to his institutions, without injuring any person in the world. Unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are *defiled* and *unbelieving*, is nothing pure. Titus i. 15. Therefore the command is, Come out from among them, and be ye *separate*, saith the Lord, and touch not the *unclean thing*. 2 Cor. vi. 14—18. He also says, Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence you are: then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence you are; DEPART from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves *thrust* out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last. Luke xiii. 24—30.

The holy city lieth foursquare, and each gate is of one pearl. And Jesus says, *Blessed* are they that do his *commandments*, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gate into the city. For without are dogs, and fornicators, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. Rev.

xxi. 13, 16, 21. xxii. 14, 15. Many good men have supposed that this new Jerusalem will be a state of absolute perfection; but will there be *nations* to be *healed* by the *tree of life*, and *kings of the earth* to bring their glory and honor into the holy city, in a state of absolute perfection? God says, In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah, We have a *strong city*, *salvation* will God appoint for *walls* and for *bulwarks*. Open ye the *gates*, that the *righteous nation which keepeth the truth* may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee. The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exacters righteousness. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy *walls salvation*, and thy *gates praise*. The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Isaiah xxvi. 1—3. lx. 3, 17—19. Now compare these passages with Rev. xxi. 16—27. xxii. 1—5. Our Lord gives the characters of the *blessed*, and says to them, *Ye are the light of the world*. *A city that is set on an hill, cannot be hid*. Give not that which is *holy* unto *dogs*, neither cast ye your *pearls* before *swine*, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rent you. The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls; who when he had found *one pearl* of great price, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. Matt.

v. 3—14. vii. 6. xiii. 45, 46. And can any man be at a loss about what he means by the pearl? For he says, Whosoever he be of you, that forsaketh *not all* that he hath, he *cannot* be my disciple. Luke xiv. 33. I am the *door*; by me if any man enter in he shall be *saved*, and shall go in and out and find pasture. I am the *way*, and the *truth*, and the *life*: no man cometh unto the Father but by me. If ye keep my *commandments*, ye shall abide in my *love*; even as I have kept my Father's *commandments*, and abide in his *love*. John x. 9. xiv. 6. xv. 10. None have any right in his church but they who are *converted*, and who act as *little children*. And no complaint is to be received against any member, until he hath had two opportunities to speak for himself, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And the church is the highest judicature upon earth, to determine all religious matters. And says Jesus, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Matt. xviii. 3—8. Therefore when some ministers of the devil had got into the church of Corinth, and intended to destroy the character of the apostle who gathered it, if possible, he refused to receive any support from thence, until he could come and have the matter tried by that church, according to the laws of Christ. But as a faithful discharge of duty is a great privilege, he said, *Forgive me this wrong*. 2 Cor. xi. 12—15. xii. 13. xiii. 1. But I have known men who were for using *force* in religious matters, that have brought the first of these passages to prove that it was a mark of the devil's ministers to preach *freely*. And others turn the same argument against all ministers who inculcate

the laws of Christ for the support of his ministers; And these opposite parties, in all nations, have bought and sold the faithful, who have been the support of public credit, by which blood and slavery have been carried round the world in galleys and gallant ships. But when the laws of Christ shall be duly executed in his church, they will not be able to strengthen their masts, nor to spread their sails. Then the cry will be heard, Alas ! alas ! no man buyeth of our merchandise any more ! Isai. xxxiii. 20—23. Rev. xviii. 6—20. Men have bought and sold the saints for *slaves*, and also the *souls* of other men, who have been *deceived* by false teachers. 2 Peter ii. 3. The priests of invented worship were of the *lowest of the people*. 1 Kings, xii. 31. xiii. 33. 2 Kings, xvii. 32. Christ is the great *light of the world*; and of all who turn not to him, it is said, The ancient and honourable, he is the *head*; and the prophet that teacheth *lies*, he is the *tail*. Isaiah ix. 1—7, 15. Matt. iv. 16. False teachers in the Roman empire were the *tail* of the dragon, who crucified Christ, and persecuted all who kept his *commandments*. And the *beast* and the false *prophet*, with the devil who *deceived* them, will be cast into the burning lake together. Rev. xii. 3, 4, 17. xix. 20. xx. 10. And will any men yield to deceit and cruelty any longer ! As long as natural birth; or a purchase with money, could bring any into the church, all adulterers and idolaters were to die without mercy. Levit. xx. 10. Deut. xiii. 6—11. And covetousness and luxury are adultery and idolatry. Col. iii. 5. Phil. iii. 2, 19. Therefore God says, Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God ? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God. James iv.

4. The builders of Babel said, Let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a *name*, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of all the earth. Gen. xi. 4. And Babylon has her name from thence; and where is the nation who are not trying to get to heaven by their own works, and to make themselves a name upon earth! Yet grievous wolves, and perverse schismatics, have been held together therein by the sword, directly against the word of God's *grace*, which says, *It is more blessed to give than to receive.* Acts xx. 28—35. It is blessed to receive, when we receive all our comforts from God, as the purchase of the blood of his Son. But it is more blessed to give; because when we do it as faithful stewards, we lay up treasures in *everlasting habitations*, which will be enjoyed with infinite pleasure, when they who had all their *good things* in this life, will not have a drop of water to cool their *tormented tongues*. Luke xvi. 9, 25. They who trust in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; and are ready to distribute, willing to communicate, for the good of others, lay up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on *eternal life*. 1 Tim. vi. 17—19. Like the olive, the fig tree, and the vine, they esteem the doing of good to their neighbours, above any command over their bodies or estates; while the unbeliever, like the bramble, says, Come and put your trust in my shadow: and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon. Judges i. 7—15. The tongues of men who would be *many masters*, set on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of *hell*. James iii. 1—6. Therefore our Lord says, As ye would that men should do to you

you, do ye also to them likewise. For every tree is known by his own fruit ; for of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble-bush gather they grapes. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good ; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil ; for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh. And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say ! Luke vi. 31, 44—46.

How piercing will this question be in the last day to the disobedient ! The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God ; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God ? and if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear ? 1 Peter iv. 17, 18. The church is the only house of God upon earth ; and it should ever be governed wholly by the revealed *will of God*. And in all expenses, both to the poor, and to support gospel ministers, we should communicate *freely*, out of love to the Son of God, who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. And there ought to be an *equality* in the church, as there was in the church of Israel, when they knew that their bread came from heaven every day. 2 Cor. viii. 5—15. Exod. xvi. 18. And how happy should we live, if our hearts and our treasure were in heaven, according to the command of Christ ? Luke xii. 14, 22—34. Here he sets a sacred guard against having his church intermeddle with the work of civil rulers. And an inspired apostle says, I have written unto you, not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer,

or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such a one, no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? but them that are without, God judgeth: therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged; but when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. 1 Cor. v. 11—13. xi. 31, 32. And shall we yet *confound* the church with the world, which is mystery Babylon? Surely men of low degree are vanity; and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity. Trust not in *oppression*, and become not vain in *robbery*: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them. God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this, that POWER belongeth unto God. Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth MERCY; for thou renderest to every man according to his work. Psalm lxii. 9—12.

And when will men believe and obey him? In the year 1533, the parliament of England revolted from the church of Rome, and set up their king as head of the church. But they retained the baptisms and laying on of hands, which they received in the church of Rome; and also the bloody principles of supporting their worship by force, and of destroying all men who opposed such an exercise of power, as far as they could extend their sword. And Great Britain hath acted upon these principles, until she is so much lighter than vanity, as scarcely to be able to pay the interest of her national debt. And though the power and mercy of God delivered America from her tyranny; yet deceit and cruelty is still exercised among us, under religious pretences. The framers of the Massa-

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chusetts Constitution, in 1780, opened a door for Roman catholicks to become lawgivers and judges for us, about soul-guides ; to justify which, they said to the people, " Your Delegates did not conceive themselves to be vested with power to set up one denomination of Christians above another ; for Religion must at all times be a matter between God and individuals." In which they allow men to be Christians, who hold the Pope of Rome to be the head of the universal church upon earth. And though every man who takes a seat in our Legislature, solemnly swears to renounce all foreign jurisdiction, " civil, *ecclesiastical or spiritual* ;" yet many ministers are supported by force among us, who hold their succession of Christianity from the church of Rome ; all which is as opposite to true Religion, which is ever a matter between God and individuals, as Belial is to Jesus Christ. Yea, how can such worship be supported by force, without *perjury* ! Christ says, With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged ; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. Mat. vii. 2. Great deceit hath been used in New-England, under religious pretences, by different denominations ; and how loud are their complaints now, against our chief Rulers in America ! To love the wages of unrighteousness, is *madness*. 2 Peter ii. 15, 16. This love moved the inhabitants of Munster in Germany, to set up a king as head of their church, and to support their worship with the sword, the same year in which England was guilty of like madness. But because the people of Munster were soon destroyed or enslaved, all men in Europe and America, who have refused to put baptism before a personal profession of faith in Christ, have been reproached with the madness of Munster. So the whore in

in Egypt, accused Joseph of the crime he avoided, and because he avoided it: But of deceit and cruelty under the mask of Religion, good old Jacob said, O my soul, come not thou into their secret: unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united. Gen. xxxiv. 25—29. xxxix. 17, 18. xlix. 5—7. And Moses says, Their vine is the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter. Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps. To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence, their foot shall slide in due time. Deut. xxxii. 32—35. Upon which Paul says, Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Rom. xii. 17—19. And Peter said to a man who thought to get power in the church by money, Thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Acts viii. 19, 23. Deceit is the poison of asps. Rom. iii. 13.

And it is as real robbery to neglect the ordinances of God, as it is to force people to support teachers who will not trust his influence for a temporal living. He curseth the blessings of all men who are partial in the law. Mal. ii. 2; 9. iii. 7—11. Therefore his faithful watchmen say, Pray for us; for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly. Heb. xiii. 18. Officers are never called priests in the church of Christ, in distinction from the rest of his children. Apostles, and elders, and brethren, was the style of his first church. Acts xv. 23. And one apostle said afterwards, The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder. 1 Peter v. 1. And another

Another said, Let the *elders* that rule well, be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who *labour* in the word and doctrine. For—the *labourer* is worthy of his *reward*. 1 Tim. v. 17, 18. Honesty requires a reward for labour, as much as charity does alms for the poor; and it is Babylonian *confusion* to hold them to be one and the same thing. Our Lord will judge all at last, according to their behaviour in this life towards his members and ministers. Mat. xxv. 31—46. Luke x. 7—16. His ministers are soldiers, as well as labourers. 2 Tim. ii. 3—7. And who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? if we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing, if we shall reap your carnal things? 1 Cor. ix. 7—11. Let each person consider how he can answer these questions to the Son of God, who only can give us safety and happiness, in time or eternity.



